

Lolium multiflorum (Poaceae): A new record for Peninsular India

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Abstract

Lolium multiflorum Lam. (Poaceae) is reported for the first time from Peninsular India. Detailed description and illustrations are provided.

Keywords: *Lolium multiflorum*, Poaceae, New Record, Peninsular India

Introduction

During the exploration tour along the Western Ghats of Tamil Nadu, the authors collected specimens of a *Lolium* species from the wet grassy slopes near "Ooty Gate" in Nilgiri district of Tamil Nadu. On critical examination with relevant literature (Bor, 1960) and study on herbarium specimens housed in the Herbarium of the Forest Research Institute, Dehra Dun (DD), it was identified as *Lolium multiflorum* Lam.

The genus *Lolium* L., has about 10 species (Mabberley, 2008) mostly distributed in temperate regions of the world. It has 4 species in India (Bor, 1960) of which two, viz. *L. perenne* L. and *L. temulentum* L. are known from Peninsular India (Kabeer & Nair, 2009). *L. multiflorum* L., is so far known only from the northern parts of India. As this species has not been recorded from Peninsular India, a brief description and detailed illustrations are provided to facilitate its identification.

Lolium multiflorum Lam., Fl. Franc. 3: 621. 1778; Hook.f., Fl. Brit. India 7: 364. 1896; Bor, Grass. Burma, Ceylon, India & Pakistan 545. 1960. *Lolium scabrum* J.S. Presl ex C.B. Presl., Rel. Haenk. 1: 267. 1830. *Lolium italicum* A. Br., Flora 17: 243. 1834.

Tufted annuals or biennials. Culms erect, 55–125 cm tall, up to 5 mm across; internodes fistular; nodes glabrous. Leaf blades 15–40 × 0.6–1.5 cm, linear to linear-lanceolate, base rounded or shallowly cordate and clasping around culm, margins scabrid, apex acuminate, glabrous or scabrid towards apex; ligule 2–4 mm long, membranous, truncate at apex; leaf sheaths 9–25 cm long, smooth to scabrellate. Inflorescence 25–62

cm long, terminal spike with 22–36 spikelets; rachis stout, terete below and angular above, fistular, scabrid. Spikelets distichously arranged along cavities in the rachis, sessile, green, 1.5–4 × 0.8–1.3 cm, oblong to elliptic-lanceolate, compressed, 10–22-flowered; callus glabrous. Lower glume absent or obscure. Upper glume 6–22 × 1.5–3 mm, longer than the lower lemma and much shorter than the spikelet, linear or linear-lanceolate, apex obtuse to acute, flat to boat-shaped, sub coriaceous, prominently 7–9-nerved, smooth or scabrid dorsally, green, margins hyaline. Lemma 8–9 × c. 3 mm, oblong-lanceolate, obtuse to acute at apex, subcoriaceous, green, margins hyaline, 5–7-nerved, awned or lower 2–5 generally awnless; awn subterminal, barbellate, 3–12 mm long. Palea 5–9 × 2–3 mm, elliptic or elliptic-lanceolate, acute at apex, chartaceous, hyaline, 2-keeled, keels ciliolate, green, 2-nerved. Florets bisexual. Lodicules 2, 1.25–2 mm long, beaked. Stamens 3; filaments c. 3 mm long; anthers 4–6 mm long, yellow. Ovary 1–1.5 × c. 1 mm, broadly obovate; style short; stigma plumose, c. 1.5 mm long. Caryopsis 4–4.5 × 1.7–2 mm, elliptic-oblong, compressed, truncate at apex, wrinkled.

Flowering & Fruiting: October–March.

Distribution: Native to Central and Southern Europe, to Northwest Africa and to temperate parts of Asia. Introduced in to temperate parts of the World.

Specimen examined: INDIA, Tamil Nadu, Nilgiri district, Odakamandalam, near "Ooty Gate" C.N. Sunil 2244 (SNMCH)

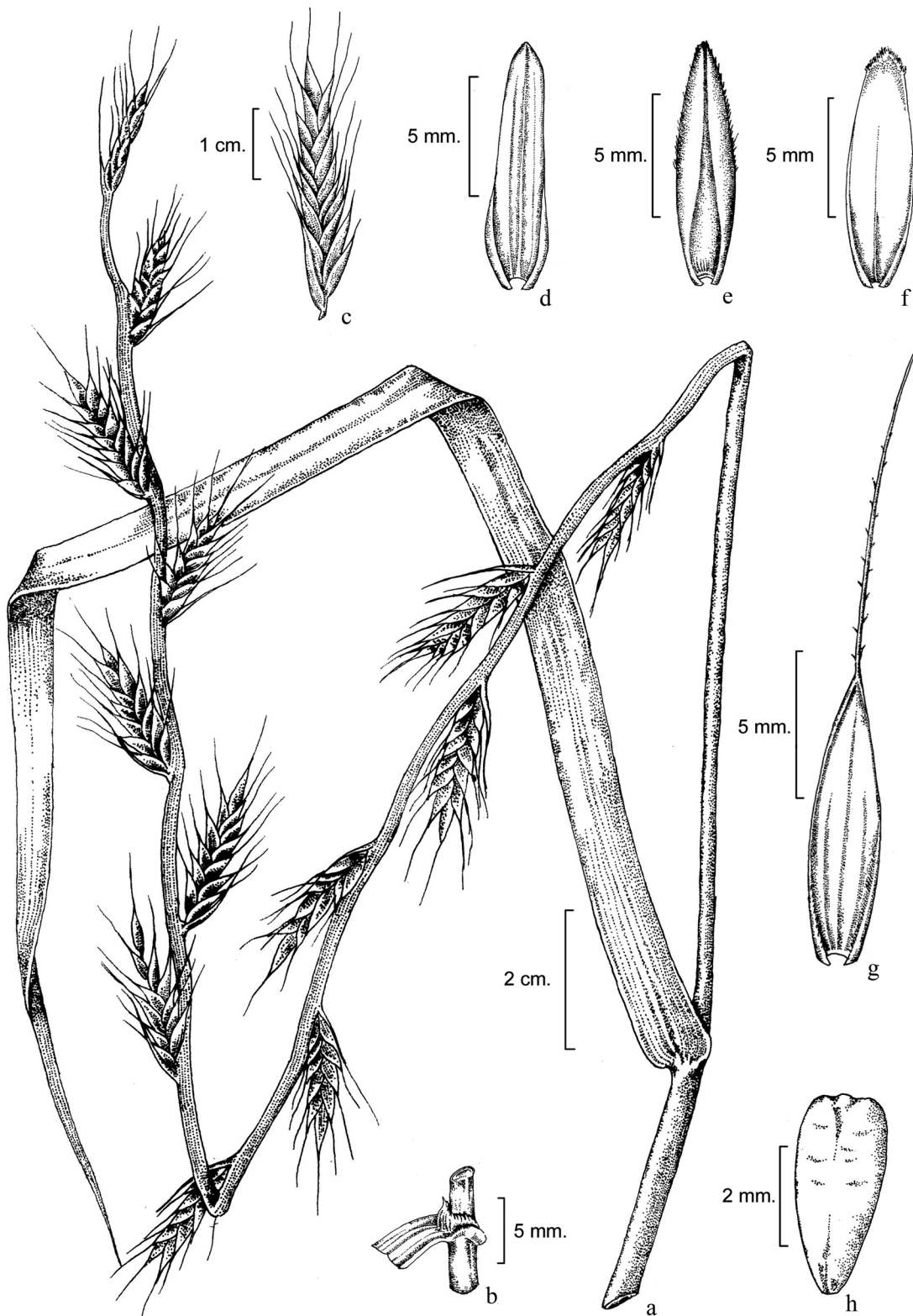


Fig. 1. *Lolium multiflorum* Lam. : **a.** Habit; **b.** Leaf base with ligule; **c.** Single spikelet; **d.** Upper glume; **e.** Palea; **f.** Lower awnless lemma; **g.** Awned lemma; **h.** Grain.

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